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NOBLE THINGS IN POLITICS

A Striking and Timely Paper from the Vigorous Pen of Hon. J. S. Clarkson.

A Rebuke to Those Who Decry the Active Politician—The Love of Politics Is Love of Country—America's Greatest Danger.

Written for the Sunday Journal.

The intellectual world has many fads. One of these is that men in politics are selfish and graspy. Society and pulpit both have a great deal to say of the brutality of politics and the selfishness of politicians. I have been twenty-four years in politics, and am ready to be called as a witness on the other side. As a result of close observation, I am ready to say that there is much more in politics to discipline and broaden men and make them more generous than in almost any other profession or pursuit in life.

It is said that there is fifteen dollars expended in labor to gain every shining gold or silver dollar out of the mines of the world. It may as truthfully be said that fifteen dollars of honest effort in behalf of good political principles, or in behalf of patriotic service for the country, is expended for every dollar a party worker in politics receives. In the arena of politics, too, fifty men work for the good of the party or country, or honestly for the good of some one else in whom they believe, where one man works for himself.

The term "politician," instead of being one of derision, ought to be a title of compliment and honor, and is such a title when the man who works for his country through his party is honest in his intentions and intelligent in his effort. The challenge by superficial people that men work too much for each other, or for men in their party, instead of being a stigma on politics is a decoration. For friendship and faith are of the best things in the world. If a man in politics believes in another, and believes that the man can accomplish good for society, for country and the government, and he devotes time, and possibly money, and a great deal of effort in behalf of that friend's promotion, he is simply doing his duty as a citizen and as a lover of his country and his kind. The sharp conflicts in politics, the friction of contests, are simply the repetition of the same things in other organized forms of human society. Indeed, the church itself is not without its sharp contests, its personal encounters, its cynicism and malice. Contests among preachers, and there are many of them, often have as much of this world in them and as much of the old Adam in them as the fights among politicians. This is true of the professional world, whether of law, medicine or what not. This is a world of friction and contest, of rivalry, and too often of jealousy and envy. Such things human pervade and actuate men in politics no more than in the other things of life.

The love of man for his party is only another form of the love of a man for his country. If he have an honest faith in his party's principles, he is a poor citizen if he does not strive in every way to advance them into the approval of the country, and into a place in the laws. It is the very theory of our government that every American has a right and a duty to his own political opinions, and to fight for them. It is the health of our politics, the sharp contests, the strong resistence of parties to each other and the fierce white light that shines on all contests between parties in American affairs. The indifference of the American voter is the greatest danger to the American Republic. Danger is not to be feared from the men who are too active in politics. It will come, rather, from the men who think themselves too good for politics, or that no party is good enough for them. Any free government is balanced on its citizens who are voters, and the safety of a republic is balanced on every vote. If voting could be made compulsory, if all the whiners and growlers of the intellectual sort could be compelled to vote, politics, of course, would be made much better. If we could have something like the Australian ballot law, and with it a statute compelling every man entitled to a vote to deposit his ballot, then the republic would have the benefit at the polls of the opinion one way or the other of every available voter in its population. The good American who will not vote once when he knows that he ought to do it is unfaithful only in a less degree than the bad American who tries to vote twice. Therefore, I think that all activity and zeal in politics, otherwise personal interest in government, instead of being discouraged ought to be encouraged. The very safety of the republic depends upon it.

As to activity and demonstration in politics the country is in little danger from the man who is proud of his colors and openly shows them, who carries a torch and goes with a hurrah on his way to political victory; that fellow is a patriot, or as near it as he has the capacity to be. It is the skulking, growling fellow, who finds no party good enough for him, who will not vote at all, who does not believe in the honesty of six millions of Democrats in a party, nor of six millions of Republicans in a party, but who scoffs at everything, and sighs for a better sort of politics and a better sort of world, who does more harm by omission than the most active man in politics does by commission. The Phariseeism that bewails selfishness in politics and yet does not participate personally in politics to make it better is simply an intellectual fashion of hypocrisy and avoidance. Nothing can be done by way of changing the government or filling offices except by the action of political parties. Every man who wants to make his influence felt must belong to one party or another. There must be unity of action to gain political victory, and party victories are the only things that count by way of changes in our government. The man who fights between the lines, or will not fight with either party, and who indicts the twelve or thirteen millions of Americans identified with one party or the other as being dishonest, might in an hour of reflection stop and wonder if it were not possible that the millions were right and he wrong.

As to the charge that in politics men grow selfish I would reply that instead they grow generous. Where one man in politics serves himself ten thousand serve their country. It is a field of constant discipline, and the sort of discipline that broadens men. It is an arena of conflict where they see the good and the bad side of men displayed. They easily and quickly learn to discover and to imitate the good and to reject the bad. It is a libel on American character and American love of fair play to say that the ignoble, mean and little man in politics wins more support than the noble, generous and true man. The salary of office is scarcely ever thought of as a bribe to manhood, except by the scoffer and the Pharisee. There is hardly a public man drawing a salary in the United States to-day, if he be above thirty years of age, who has not expended for his party's honest needs, for his country's honest behalf, more of his own money than he finds returned in present salary. Indeed, politics is a school of generosity rather than of selfishness. Poor men take of their little to help their party, because they believe that their party helps their country. Good men never fight together without a bond of sympathy being developed between them. Good men in warfare are always generous to the weak, quick to go to the helpless and needy, generous in standing aside for those who are worthy.

If every man who worked in politics got an office, as every man in a stock company gets a share of stock, politics might be said to be based on selfishness; but it is a case where the forty-nine men work generously for the fiftieth. Here you see men in a school of generosity, the many working for the one, and not working for him so much as for party and country. If the work of the forty-nine for the one be called friendship, the indictment is one of compliment. For there is no friendship without faith, and no faith among good men unless the man who is trusted is good himself. The average American voter knows that the protection of his home and of his own life, as well as that of his country, is involved in his political action and his choice of men for office. Therefore, in contests into which men carry their own convictions of honor, their love of country and their sense of protection for their families, they show at their best, and are constantly developed for the best that is in them, rather than for the worst.

The world of politics takes care of its poor, helps to reform by human sympathy and cheer those who have made mistakes, helps to make everything fair and free from successful accusation or strain, as much as any other of the organized forms of society. It is in contest that men learn to know each other. It is in contest that they learn to be generous. Politics has developed good fellowship in many a chap who never knew before what good fellowship was. It has taught him to be generous where he was little and mean before. It has shamed him into the display of manhood where it was not in him to be manly before. Participation in a great political contest, the same as participation in office, tends to make a man conservative. Put responsibility on an American, and you have got your best American. Put responsibility on men in a political convention, and you have made better Americans of them. Men go together in politics to help serve their country. The indictment of men in politics for selfishness has nothing to stand on. There are twelve or thirteen millions of men who are active in politics, and there are less than three hundred thousand offices. Why indict the thirteen million men who go into politics as all hunting for an office, in face of this great fact, that there is not an office for one in fifty? Why not be fair? Why should not intellectual critics and moral cynics be fair, even with workers in politics? It would be a great change, and a new experience to them; but why not try it for once?

In the last year, holding an humble place in the government where I have had to do business with every neighborhood in the United States (for every neighborhood has a postoffice, and every man in every neighborhood is interested in the postoffice), I have had abundant opportunity to study this side of human nature. It has refreshed my faith in mankind. In the hundreds of thousands of letters that have come to me, in the hundreds of thousands of men with whom I have talked, and on whose counsel I have acted, I have found that ninety-nine times out of a hundred the noblest motives, those that are dearest in the family and safest in the Nation, are at the bottom of their counsel. The love of country has been shown by the Union soldier everywhere being given the preference—and he has had it two times out of three, and in ninety-five cases out of one hundred, where he at all deserved it or was competent for the office. It has been shown again in the voluntary act of men in politics everywhere, in the last year, who had made the fight for their party and won it, voluntarily taking themselves out of chance for office, and recommending women—widows, without other means of support, elder daughters left to support the family, girls with no other means of a living, children of distinguished families left poor—and placing them in the offices instead. There have been thousands of cases of this kind. Every one of them is noble disproof of the charge of professional moralists and cynics that all politics is selfishness and all politicians selfish men.

I have seen thousands of other disproofs of the challenge. Thousands of men have come to Washington to serve some deserving person, paid their own expenses, and taken valuable time for the good errand. I have known a thousand men in the last year each to spend more than the salary for a year of the office sought for, saying nothing of their time, to come to Washington to get a small postoffice for some disabled soldier or some needy woman. The files of the Postoffice Department are luminous with letters of good human feeling and kindness, and of the desire of good men to serve those who are worthy or who are in need. If I had been a cynic, a hater of my kind, a doubter of the good in men, a believer in selfishness in politics, when I took the office I now hold a year ago, this past year's experience alone would have converted me and taught me to love better than ever my fellow-men, taught me to believe in the good in human nature, and taught me that in America almost every man is willing to serve his deserving neighbor. Indeed, a year's service in any public position would increase the faith of almost any man in his fellow-men.

In public places you see human nature from every angle. The motives of men are laid bare to your eye. Selfishness comes to show its ugly face very often, as it does in every other profession and vocation of life; but very much more often comes the good that is in human nature, with its open, generous hand, its warm and trusting heart, and its desire to serve some human being that is in need, or some good motive that will help the government. I venture to say that there are more sacrifices made by men in politics—sacrifices that it costs them much to make—than in any other form of society in America. It is said to be a good test in Christian zeal to sacrifice and give so that it hurts. It ought to be as good a test in politics; and there has not been a day since I have been in Washington that I have not seen men make sacrifices that hurt, sacrifices that were made purely for human kindness, party good or the good of the government. Others may afford to ignore and peck at such generosity; I am too poor in superior virtues to scoff at any such nobility.

Another noble thing in politics is that men in politics for the present time do not forget those who passed before them in the previous generation. I have seen hundreds of men in the past year give up chance of office for themselves to let it go to the son or daughter of some man who had served his country well, or his party generously, and gone his way and left his family poor. Indeed, I think there is something of good, not only in the Republican, but in the Democratic party, that prompts both to considerations of humanity of this kind. I know that in the present administration the sons and daughters of distinguished men now dead, who were Democrats, have been given official place and shown great consideration, because their fathers in their time served the country well and left their descendants poor. Every department in Washington is proof of this. There is hardly a room in any of the departments, where there are four or five clerks, that one of the clerks does not hold the place purely because of his or her ancestral worth. In the Postoffice Department are descendants of almost all of the greater Americans of the past, beginning with lineal descendants of George Washington, and embracing the distinguished men of both and all political parties. These are the wards of politics, the inherited wards, that the good heart of politics takes care of and would not allow to be touched. Some of them began in the Democratic days, before Lincoln's administration; others under a Republican President. They served through the Cleveland administration; they are serving under this. Many of them are old and infirm, many of them drawing the largest salaries and doing the least work. Yet the government owes them consideration, and the heart of politics, called so hard and brutal by the unthinking, sees that this consideration is continued to them.

Where one dollar is made in politics a hundred dollars is either lost or else not earned where it might be. The fact that the departments, and that the federal offices all through the country, and many of the State and domestic offices, are filled with the descendants of public men who died poor goes conclusively to show that men do not make money out of politics or public place. Any one of intelligence and good memory can count on his fingers the great public men who have died rich. Indeed, who are the great public men who have held office who have died rich? There is hardly a useful man serving in public life to-day who could not get twice, three times or quadruple the salary, or make that much more money in profession or business, than he is now receiving from Uncle Sam. Within the past few weeks Hon. Samuel J. Randall died in a modest home, on a bed worth $10, after having served his country for twenty years at one-fifth of what he could have earned in private life. The nobilities of politics had increased his natural manhood until he found his greatest pride in sacrifice. He showed the pride of the true politician when, after a life of sacrifice and dying in comparative poverty, he refused a gift of $40,000, offered him by his generous neighbors with the best of intentions. Let the church and the other professions produce men to match the many men in politics who have served their country at a personal loss, and kept their families poor, and refused gifts in the time of need before the general cavil as to selfishness in politics and politicians is accepted as gospel good and true. The recollection is still vivid to nearly everybody of intelligence of scores of public men in both parties dying in Washington—Justices of the Supreme Court, members of Congress, occupants of other places, and dying so poor that friendship had to come in and pay their funeral expenses and to keep their families from want.

Political parties are no more selfish than politicians. Where the public pays to men elected to office one dollar, political parties, or the men making political parties, spend $10 by way of increasing public intelligence, by way of giving to the public the ablest discussion of current events, by way of extending the circulation of newspapers and magazines, by way of bringing to the reach and knowledge of every voter the right side of the argument. If a political party be called a co-operative office-seeking association, as the cynics say, the country is not in much danger from it when it spends $10 for the public good, where the man it elects to office receives $1. So I say that politics is a generous thing, not an ungenerous and selfish. I say that politics broadens men, disciplines them into manhood and nobility, rather than narrows them into selfishness and meanness. The very friendship of politics that is growled about is the best thing in it. The friendship of good men for others will never endanger this Republic. There may be other things better for other worlds, but honest friendship is the best thing in this, and we have to get along in this world until we get to the other. There is a good deal of moral casualty in politics, but so there is in everything else in human life.

Men in politics make mistakes, but so did Saint Peter, and he reached the other world. So I hope will many of the people in this world who have made mistakes. It is the humanity of Saint Peter that gives us all hope. We do not turn to the perfect apostles; we go to good old Peter for our hope. When he fell down in weakness and got up in strength he left an open door for all of us who are human. All the men in politics are not Saint Johns. Many of them are Saint Peters. They are serving their party, their country, and the world all the better for it. I would rather send my boys into politics to learn manliness, self-sacrifice and generosity, the honor of personal word, the chance to do good, the duty to be generous, than in any other school in practical life that I know. The church, of course, is far better than politics; none of the professions are any better.

The good heart of politics ought to be encouraged. Political warfare has made many poor hearts better and stronger. The good heart of President Harrison in the past year has been shown in thousands of decisions made for the sake of humanity, for the sake of gratitude on the part of the country more than party. So with nearly every other public officer having decisions in politics or public life to make. A government without a heart is not a government to be loved. This government has always had a heart. It remembered and put in office as long as they lived, in every sort of place, the soldiers of the revolution, of the war of 1812, of the war with Mexico and of the great war for the Union. It would not be worthy to live if it did not remember its saviors. One of the cruelties of public life now is that civil-service reform in law often compels a public official to turn a war-worn veteran away from his door when there are dozens of places under him filled by men able-bodied, who never served their country, and yet which the old soldier who helped to save his nation could fill as well and more faithfully. Any civil-service law that makes a government appear ungrateful to its defenders is not a good law in a Christian land.

Very beautiful and good is friendship. This world is nothing without it. A few evenings ago, while sitting late at my work, a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, a man of seventy-two or three years old, who is growing footsore with the weight of many years, came into my room. I was surprised, and said: "Why, Judge, what is your errand so late in the day?" He answered: "I have an errand for a friend, who is ill and not able to attend to it for himself. He is anxious about a small postoffice in New Mexico, where a friend and comrade of his is a candidate, and as he could not come to plead for it I have come in his place." I told him that what he asked should be done, and said: "Judge, how long are you at your age going to keep up these errands of friendship, going about the departments every week, climbing long stairs, and using your valuable time, or when you should be at leisure, in performing such offices?" He replied: "As long as I live. That is what we are in this world for, and when I die I ask that nothing better be placed in record above me than this: 'He was faithful to every friend.'" This gospel of faithfulness in human friendship from the lips of a man who is in my judgment the greatest American living to-day in all the elements of actual greatness, shows the good heart of politics. There is much in politics, of course, that is sad, faithless and unworthy. But there is very much more that is splendid and good.

J. S. CLARKSON.

CUSTER'S LAST BATTLE.

A Well-Known Military Man's Theory of the Fight—Sitting Bull Was Not Present.

Capt. Charles King, in August Harper.

Never realizing, as I believe, the fearful odds against him, believing that he would find the village "on the run," and that between himself and Reno he could "double them up" in short order, Custer had jauntily trotted down to his death. It was a long five-mile ride from where he sighted the northern end of the village to where he struck its center around that bold point of bluff, and from the start to the moment his guidons whirled into view, and his troopers came galloping "front into line," down near the ford, he never fairly saw the great village—never dreamed of its depth and extent. Rounding the bluff, he suddenly found himself face to face with thousands of the boldest and most skillful warriors of the prairies. He had hoped to charge at once into the heart of the village, to hear the cheers of Reno's men from the south. Instead he was greeted with a perfect fury of flame and hissing lead from the dense thicket of willow and cottonwood, a fire that had to be answered at once. Quickly he dismounted his men threw them forward on the run, each fourth man holding, cavalry fashion, the horses of the other three. The line seems to have swept in parallel very nearly with the general course of the stream, but to no purpose. The foe was ten to one in their front. Boys and squaws were shooting from the willows (Oh, we had plenty guns!" said our story-tellers); and worse than that, hundreds of young warriors had mounted their ponies and swarmed across the stream below him, hundreds more were following and circling all about him. And then it was that Custer, the hero of a hundred daring charges, seems to have realized that he must cut his way out. "Mount!" rang the trumpets, and leaving many a poor fellow on the ground, the troopers ran for their horses. Instantly from lodge and willow Ogalallas and Brules sprang to horse and rushed to the ford in mad pursuit. "Make for the heights!" must have been the order, for the first rush was eastward; then more to the left, as they found their progress barred. Then, as they reached higher ground, all they could see, far as they could see, circling, swooping, yelling like demons, and all the time keeping up their furious fire, were thousands of the mounted Sioux. Hemmed in, cut off, dropping fast from their saddles, Custer's men saw that retreat was impossible. They sprang to the ground, "turned their horses loose," said the Indians, and by that time half their number had fallen. A skirmish line was thrown out down the slope, and there they dropped at five yards' interval; there their comrades found them two days after. Every instant the foe rode closer and gained in numbers; every instant some poor fellow bit the dust. At last, on a mound that stands at the northern end of a little ridge, Custer, with Cook, Yates, and gallant "Brother Tom," and some dozen soldiers, all that were left by this time, gathered in the last rally. They sold their lives dearly, brave fellows that they were; but they were as a dozen to the leaves of the forest at the end of twenty minutes, and in less than twenty-five—all was over. * * *

Sitting Bull was not the inspiration of the great victory won by the Sioux. Up to this time he had no real claims as a war chief. Eleven days before the fight there was a "sun dance." His own people have since told us these particulars, and the best story-teller among them was that bright-faced squaw of Tatonka-he-gle-ska—Spotted Horn Bull—who accompanied the party on their Eastern trip. She is own cousin to Sitting Bull, and knows whereof she speaks. The chief had a trance and vision. Solemnly he assured his people that within a few days they would be attacked by a vast force of white soldiers, but that the Sioux should triumph over them; and when the Crows and Crook's command appeared on the 17th it was a partial redemption of his promise.

Wary scouts saw Reno's column turning back down the Rosebud after discovering the trail, and nothing, they judged, would come from that quarter. All around Crook's camp on Goose creek the indications were that the "Gray Fox" was simply waiting for more soldiers before he would again venture forth. Sitting Bull had no thought of a new attack for days to come, when, early on the morning of the 25th, two Cheyenne Indians who had started eastward at dawn came dashing back to the bluffs, and waving their blankets signalled, "White soldiers—heaps—coming quick." Instantly all was uproar and confusion.

Of course women and children had to be hurried away, the great herds of ponies gathered in, and the warriors assembled to meet the coming foe. Even as the chiefs were hastening to the council lodge there came a crash of rapid volleys from the south. It was Reno's attack—an attack from a new and utterly unexpected quarter—and this, with the news that Long Hair was thundering down the ravine across the stream, was too much for Sitting Bull. Hurriedly gathering his household about him, he lashed his pony to the top of his speed, and fled westward for safety. Miles he galloped before he dared stop for breath. Behind him he could hear the roar of battle, and on he would have sped but for the sudden discovery that one of his twin children was missing. Turning, he was surprised to find the fire dying away, soon ceasing altogether. In half an hour more he managed to get back to camp, where the missing child was found, but the battle had been won without him. Without him the Blackfeet and Uncapapas had repelled Reno and penned him on the bluffs. Without him the Ogalallas, Brules and Cheyennes had turned back Custer's daring assault, then rushed forth and completed the death-gripping circle in which he was held. Again had Crazy Horse been foremost in the fray, riding in and braining the bewildered soldiers with his heavy war-club. Fully had his vision been realized, but—Sitting Bull was not there.

For a long time it was claimed for him by certain sycophantic followers that from the council lodge he directed the battle; but it would not do. When the old sinner was finally starved out of her Majesty's territory, and came in to accept the terms accorded him, even his own people could not keep straight faces when questioned as to the cause of the odd names given those twins — "The-one-that-was-taken" and "The-one-that-was-left." Finally it all leaked out, and now "none so poor as to do him reverence."

Of course, it was his role to assume all the airs of a conqueror, to be insolent and defiant to the "High Joint Commission," sent the following winter to beg him to come home and be good; but the claims of Tatonka-e-Yotanka to the leadership in the greatest victory his people ever won are mere vaporings, to be classed with the boasting of dozens of chiefs who were scattered over the northern reservations during the next few years. Rain-in-the-Face used to brag by the hour that he killed Custer with his own hand, but the other Indians laughed at him. Gall, of the Uncapapas, Spotted Eagle, Kill Eagle, Lame Deer, Lone Wolf, and all the varieties of Bears and Bulls were probably leading spirits in the battle, but the man who, more than all others, seems to have won the admiration of his fellows for skill and daring throughout that stirring campaign, and especially on that bloody day, is he who soon after met his death in desperate effort to escape from Crook's guards, the warrior Crazy Horse.

QUICKER THAN LIGHTNING.

The Action of the Human Body Outstrips Everything.

Electrical Review.

"As quick as lightning" is a phrase colloquially used to express the maximum of rapidity. But, according to a contemporary, electritity itself is outstripped by that old-fashioned machine, the human body, by which it appears power can, so to speak, be generated in the brain, transmitted through the nerves and developed in the muscles in an infinitesimal fraction of a second. It is stated that a pianist, in playing a presto of Mendelssohn, played 5,595 notes in four minutes and three seconds. The striking of each of these, it has been estimated, involves two movements of the finger and possibly more. Again, the movement of the wrists, elbows and arms can scarcely be less than one movement for each note. As twenty-four notes were played each second, and each involves three movements, we would have seventy-two voluntary movements per second. Again, the place, the force, the time and the duration of each of these movements was controlled. All these motor reactions were conditioned upon a knowledge of the position of each finger of each hand before it was moved, while moving it, as well as of the auditory effect to force and pitch, all of which involves at least equally rapid sensory transmissions. If we add to this the work of the memory in placing the notes in their proper position, as well as the fact that the performer at the same time participates in the emotions the selection describes, and feels the strength and weaknesses of the performance, we arrive at a truly bewildering network of impulses, coursing along at inconceivably rapid rates. Such estimates show, too, that we are capable of doing many things at once. The mind is not a unit, but it is composed of higher and lower centers, the available fund of attention being distributed among them.

A Field for Women.

Illustrated American.

About the broadest, richest field for feminine talent in this country is offered in the architect's profession. It presents countless advantages and scarcely a single disability to the sex. In facility and skill in the use of their pencils women are ready rivals of men, and yet for lack of proper direction they fritter away their abilities decorating china teacups, with a lot of other trumpery, while the masculine artist sets himself to making his art pay. Taken for granted that neither one has a sufficient gift as colorist, anatomist, or original designer to paint worthy pictures, their tactics are altogether different. The man immediately appreciates his limitation and studies some of the lesser branches, while the woman maintains a hopeless struggle against fate. It would be but fitting that women should excel in the science of house-planning and house-building, for their hearts and dearest interests are centered there. In the adaption of closets, cupboards and butteries, in servants' departments and kitchen conveniencies, they are born connoisseurs. Why, then, none, or so very few, turn their attention to architecture, it is difficult to explain, unless, indeed, they have lacked a spur to put them on the right path. There is small doubt that if a clever draughtwoman, one who has studied the primary and intermediate degrees thoroughly, should apprentice herself to one of the many firms established throughout the country, she would, in time, stand just as fair a chance as any male employe of winning promotion and financial distinction?

A Glimpse of the Sultan.

Pittsburg Press.

The Sultan looks like many another man, with black hair and short black mustache and beard, neither very old nor very young. I have not enough admiration for him to call him handsome. He was in uniform and wore a red tarbush or fez hat, which, by the way, is the distinguishing head dress of every Mohommedan, from the chief ruler to the tiniest lad that repeats the Koran. Later in the day, when we were in the magnificent mosque of St. Sophia, in the Stamboul quarter, I asked the guide if the Sultan never came to that mosque. He said: "No; he is afraid." The fact is the Sultan is a prisoner in his palace, afraid to venture in the public throng lest he meet the fate of some of his predecessors. How pleasant it must be to be Sultan!

ONE OF LIFE'S NECESSITIES

Shirley Dare Tells of Water, Clear and Sparkling, Hiding Ills and Death.

She Urges that It Be Boiled and Filtered—Disease Will Come to Those Who Scoff at Chemist and Physician—Ice No Longer King.

Written for the Sunday Journal.

Pure water and pure air are the first necessities of life, and must be obtained if a fine development is desired. Fresh air, pure water, bathing, hygienic diet and self-control contain the fundamental principles of true religion.

The State boards of health and eminent professors in medical colleges are making close study of the relation of water to disease and the best modes of securing the purity of drinking-water. It is well established on the best medical authority that thirty thousand people die in the United States yearly from typhoid fever, of which the majority of cases are communicated through drinking-water. Other diseases directly caused by impure water are colic, erysipelas, sore throat, constipation, gastritis, pneumonia, dysentery, liver and skin diseases, dyspepsia and general debility.

Most of the water used falls short of purity and safety. That from streams and lakes must carry the wash of shores and decaying vegetable and animal matter, not sufficient to make it positively unpleasant always, but quite enough to furnish the germs of dangerous ailments and the fertilizing medium for these to develop in their worst forms. How far the fearful ravages of cancer and mysterious tumors are owing to impure water and food is partially comprehended. It is certain that with pure blood and nourishment they would be nearly impossible. The water from tanks and cisterns can only be kept sweet and safe by constant care, and is seldom fit to use as it leaves the faucet. The vascid, slimy lining of water-pipes, deposits from the water standing in them, not only contains organic matter—that is, living, microscopic animals—but produces them. In the language of the laboratory, it is the vehicle for their culture, in which they breed and multiply. No water which deposits a slimy coating on pails and pitchers by standing is safe for drinking or cooking. Were the microscope as common as the thermometer and as frequently referred to it would not be necessary to demonstrate the necessity of pure water. No one could taste infected water after once seeing the horrid forms with which it swarms, in their malignant shapes types of the evil they accomplish, infinitesimal demons of the air and water. It is well they are hid from our eyes, or existence would be organized nightmare. But these malignant presences abound, seen or unseen, and it is time to lay aside other considerations to learn how to preserve ourselves from them.

Experiments testing the purity of drinking water under various conditions have lately occupied the first chemists and physicians here and abroad, and will be found most valuable and instructive reading. Town libraries and doctors should provide themselves with the reports of Professor Angell, of Derry, N. H., to the State Board of Health; of Mr. Frankland, to the Royal Society of England, and Dr. Charles G. Currier on his experiments with drinking water in the laboratories of Berlin and the Carnegie Laboratory of New York city. Probably no result of his great wealth is of more public benefit or more credit to the many-millioned man whose name it bears than the new and well-equipped laboratory for experiments relating to health which neighbors Bellevue Hospital and Medical School. Dr. Currier enumerates the most distressful scourges among diseases caused by bacteria in impure drinking water season after season, to which cause is traced such "inexcusable epidemics" as the recent outbreak of typhoid fever at Cumberland, on the Potomac.

The truth is gradually gaining currency that it is in general safest to consume water and milk like other foods—after cooking them. Even water charged with carbonic acid gas for soda fountains, usually and rightly regarded as preferable for purity to ordinary water, allows certain kinds of bacteria to increase in water charged with gas under a pressure of over one hundred pounds to the square inch.

As original bacteria perish more rapidly in soda waters when charged than in simple water this affords a resource in case the general supply for drinking is inferior in sickly seasons. A small addition of alcohol or spirits also prevents injurious results from bad water, but cannot always be depended on to destroy germs of disease unless in stronger proportion than is pleasant to most tastes.

Boiling most effectually destroys the germs if the heat is kept up long enough. It has been said in medical journals that fifteen minutes' boiling was enough to purify even infected water. Doubtful of this fact, Dr. Currier made over fifty careful experiments at the Carnegie laboratory, besides a series at the Health Institute in Berlin. His first remark is interesting to all housekeepers.

To remove sediment and yet have the micro organisms, the bacteria, the harmful germs, remain in the water, it was strained through thin layers of sand or absorbent cotton. This proves at once the mistake of supposing that small plug filters to screw on faucets are of any material use in purifying water, or that ordinary layers of cotton batting will keep fermenting germs out of preserved fruit. No hasty or slight methods are enough to secure the purity and keeping of food or water. It is demonstrated that water may be entirely clear and yet swarm with the living seeds of fever and other putrid diseases. Boiling destroys this microscopic life. The germs of tubercular disease—that is, consumption—are killed by ten minutes' boiling. The typhoid bacilli and the pus-producing kinds are harmless when the water has been brought to the boiling point and allowed to cool slowly. Cholera germs are still more sensitive.

Dr. Currier concludes that water whose purity is suspected becomes harmless when boiled ten minutes. From many tests he thinks the bacteria of ordinary clear hydrant water are destroyed in this time, though the Berlin Professor Koch disagrees with this opinion. Dr. Carnegie added putrefying solutions of meat, vegetables and earths to produce the worst possible waters, and found, after straining them, that the bacteria rarely resisted twenty minutes' boiling, though one tough variety kept alive from forty-five to sixty minutes while boiling.

In the experiments at the Carnegie laboratory the water was strained and decanted into flasks plugged with cotton, lowered with a thread round the necks into a steam sterilizer, which, by the combined use of a rose burner and a large Bunsen burner, was kept at its highest heat, 155 degrees centigrade. The flasks were steadily heated for thirty-seven minutes, and single ones withdrawn at intervals, leaving the longest in 103 minutes. By test it was found that living bacilli resisted boiling up to seventy-two minutes, when none were found alive. The flasks were allowed to cool gradually, then samples were tested after one, seven and ten days. The water retained its heat so long in the warm laboratory that the bacteria lost their vitality before it cooled, even in the flasks steamed thirty-seven minutes. In a sample of the original water they multiplied greatly, but none were found in the boiled water, and solutions of steamed water kept a year, closely corked, were completely free from animal germs, though other changes took place.

In the stomach and intestines these bacteria taken in drinking water increase enormously, giving off great amounts of foul gases and other noxious products. Raising clear water, containing the micro-organisms of typhoid, cholera, diphtheria or of pus diseases, to the boiling point and allowing it slowly to cool destroys these germs. In case of surgical operations or of wounds it is of the first necessity to have water absolutely free from all germs, as the heat may produce fatal inflammation. Passages in Hippocrates and Galen show that the ancient Greeks valued pure boiled water, and also that to which salt was added and boiled, for cleansing of wounds and surgery.

It is interesting, says Dr. Currier, to find a typically skillful modern surgeon, Prof. H. Fritsch, of Breslau, announces that water with only a six to one thousand solution of common salt, sterilized by long boiling, is preferable to the carbolic and corrosive sublimate solutions continually used for the most delicate and hazardous operations. In abdominal surgery, where antiseptic solutions are by some doctors considered objectionable, water is harmless if boiled an hour and allowed to cool.

But boiling does not wholly fit impure water to be the ideal drink. Still, more careful and rigid experiment proves that boiled water swarming with dead bacteria is little better than a beef tea or broth of microscopic flesh, none too wholesome at best, and liable to speedy change, which makes it undesirable for the human system. To this is due, probably, the albuminous changes found in morphine solutions by Dr. Currier. The water in this state is capable of disastrous change.

The filter comes in play to strain out these dead animalculæ, inconsiderable in themselves, but able to putrefy in time and give the water a foul taste. T. F. Frankland recently reports to the Royal Society of England his experiments on the purification of water. In his paper on filtration he says: "Green sand, coke, animal charcoal and spongy iron were at first successful in removing all organisms from the water passing through them, but after one month's continuous action this power was in every case lost. The improvement still effected, however, by spongy iron and coke was very great, indeed, while the green sand and brick dust were much less efficient, and the number of organisms in the water filtered through charcoal was greater than in the unfiltered water," because it washed out the germs left by previous fluid. This enforces the opinion that filters need renewal every month to remain satisfactory. A common filter used through a season will yield clear water by leaching out the impalpable earth and sand which ever so slightly colors it, but it will not begin to remove the deadly nitrites and bacteria which may exist in clear water. All filters should be so made that the filtering part may be removed and a new one attached monthly, and if this is done there is little choice between the various materials used to clarify the water, whether charcoal, animal or vegetable; quartz sand, green sand, coke dust or spongy iron, which last, although the best of the known filtering material, is practically unknown in this country, except to chemists.

To secure perfectly pure safe drinking water for the household, and so far insure immunity from diseases which ravage the summer and make heat unbearable, where they do not actually prostrate, it is necessary to boil the water first and filter it afterward. Fortunate is the family who from well in new soil or spring from mountain head can draw pure, sparkling water without further process. Such draughts are stimulant and refreshment to the body as well as relief to the thirst, and one may take drink freely as of the ocean air. Free water drinking to the amount of two or three quarts daily for a grown person, accompanied by free perspiration, greatly reduces the oppression of summer heat and supplies the place of food in a degree. But the fluid supplied by most towns and villages needs careful preparation before it is anything but an inoculation of disease.

Capt. Douglas Galton, one of the first living authorities on sanitary subjects, lecturing before the Royal Engineers, says: "The soil in many cities and villages is loaded with nitre and salt, the chemical results of animal and vegetable refuse left to decay, from the presence of which the well water is impure. There are many factories of saltpetre in India derived from this source, and during the great French wars, when England blockaded all the seaports of Europe, the first Napoleon obtained saltpeter for gunpowder from the cess-pits of Paris." The almost universal modes of village life mean the presence of large and increasing masses of putrefying matter in the soil, a condition which in India is the origin of cholera or the terrible Delhi ulcer, and in our own climate is responsible for at least one-third the death rate.

From first to last the water supply should be under the care of the head of the household and not trusted to servants. They will not take the trouble to draw off the water the first thing in the mornings that has been standing in pipes all night to corrode lead pipes or absorb sewer gas from adjacent waste pipes which have the usual pinholes eaten through them. "Lead pipes will be eaten away by water containing free oxygen without carbonic acid; therefore, pure rain water injures lead pipes," says Captain Galton, and the infusion of lead in the water standing over night is quite enough to give the babies colic and renew the symptoms of the "grip" in the elders of the family unless the stream is allowed to run until it is cold and clear. This water need not run to waste, but may be saved in a firkin for washing uses. A supply of fresh drinking water for the day should then be boiled in a bright tin-lined or enamel kettle, for the copper-lined teakettles are only another of the deadly devices which abound in housekeeping. Tea made from water boiled in a copper-lined kettle is a corrosive infusion equal to upsetting the digestion in time, if it does not ruin the vital economy altogether, like so much arsenic.

After boiling ten minutes the water should be poured into a wooden or stone jar, covered with a cloth and left an hour to cool, when it may be put into the filter. For a filter a new clean flower-pot of unglazed clay, filled monthly, or rather changed for one freshly charged, is better than most of the patents in the market. First cut a disk of cotten flannel to fit the bottom of the pot inside, put on this a layer of clean white sand an inch thick, then three inches of charcoal in very coarse powder, three inches of sand above this, and clean washed gravel over all, and you have as good a filter for a dollar as you can buy for ten, as far as working goes. The water must run through this twelve hours before the charcoal dust washes out so that the fluid runs clear. The pot should fit into the top of a long stone jar, with faucet attached, and the ice be hung in it, tied in a piece of cotton flannel for a primitive mode of keeping the iceworms out and making the ice last longer.

The only trouble with water so prepared is that it tastes flat from want of air, which Dr. Currier proposes to supply by a clean bellows kept for the purpose, but it is more conveniently done by pouring water from one pitcher to another several times as foaming drinks are mixed. Or one of the patent egg and cake beaters could be used in the water for a few minutes, and the most discriminating palate could hardly fail to approve water so refined.

Last comes the question of cooling the water, a matter which has its economical side, and from personal experience I am very willing to impart the method of checkmating ice monopolies. It should be distinctly understood that the idea that ice-water is injurious is a mistaken notion, imported with other English fads, like the docking of horses' manes and tails, drawling the vowels and the "stony British stare." Spinsters with chronic indigestion, stout women with their interiors in a state of constant inflammation, men whose stomachs are inflamed with regular whisky or wine drinking, and people getting over the grip, with internals weak, fevered and irritable to an incredible degree, rightly find ice-water injurious, as cold well water would be poured over a patient in a high fever, or rather like throwing cold water on a red-hot boiler. Cold water is intolerable to an inflamed eye, which finds warm water soothing, and inflamed stomachs rebel against sudden chilling draughts in the same way, but nobody feels that cold water is unsafe for healthy eyes or healthy throats.

Who ever thought of refusing to drink of pure mountain streams flowing from melting snows? Not even the infallible Britons, who set down the drinking of "iced water" as a trait of American depravities. A race of brandy-drinkers would always find ice-water dangerous to the raw membrane with which they are lined from brain to base.

But ice, like water, needs to be clean before it is fit for drinking, and a glance at the sediment in the ice pitchers is enough to raise grave doubts of the source of the ice supply. One must admire the thrift of the housekeepers in a central New York town, who, finding the ice crop scant, or having no way to harvest it, on cold nights filled all possible pots and pans with well water and froze their own ice, freezing the cakes together next day, till the blocks were thick enough to store away. They at least had pure ice for the summer, and I doubt if they ever found injury from using it.

But the blood that threw off the yoke of a crown for a tax of a shilling rebels against paying a dollar a hundred-weight for ice at the bidding of a monopoly when ice is dear at 25 cents a hundred. In the revised republic ice will never be allowed over that sum. Why should it be when a manufactory at the foot of Fourteenth street, New York, turns out ice-machines which are capable of making seven tons of ice a day, any weather? Made ice from filtered water would be an ideal cooling substance. But machine or no machine, the honest citizen may be independent of ice-dealers by simple expedients. He can take a leaf from the experience and practice of three-fourths of the globe, who cool their drinks in the natural way by evaporation in a current of air. A housekeeper, not wishing to be bothered with the care of ice and ice-box in addition to her other work, kept water and food cool all one hot summer by this method. She bought large porous flower-pots, soaked them over night in water till the clay was saturated, set her jars of butter and other food in pans of water on a broad shelf outside the kitchen window and covered each with an inverted flower-pot, throwing a wet flannel over the whole. In the shaded window, with the breeze playing on the covers, constantly wet from the water in the pans, the food kept in as good or better condition than it did on the ice. The butter was waxen firm and the fruit fresher than it is from a stagnant ice-box. Water so cooled was like fresh well water, and nobody grumbled about the lack of ice. For ice cream she had whips and mousses of jelly beaten up with raw egg and lemon, which I advise anbody to try before they sneer at the idea. Blanc mange or custard for ice-cream, beaten up with fruit or without and chilled, vies with ice-creams to any discriminating taste, and mashed fruit beaten with gelatine and sugar, chilled just to the freezing point, has a fullness of flavor which is lost in freezing outright. Try this before you scoff and you will hardly go back to the slavery of stirring the freezer for ice-creams or the tame flavors of confectioners' ices.

The picturesque method of keeping water once boiled filtered and aerated is in the Portuguese or Moorish water-cooler of burnt clay, in graceful flask or cruse, with slender neck clasped by vine tendrils and leafage, swung from blue or crimson cords in the window current. The water soaks the clay, the breeze chills it and the draught of such wise is a velvety decoction, surpassing raw water as Lachryma Christi excels last year's claret. It soothes the irritated membranes of the throat and the internal organs. It acts, in fact, medicinally, healing gastric and intestinal disorders, promoting sleep, good humor and healthy action of the nerves. More than half the ugliness of human nature comes from internal bodily derangement and every healthy condition of food, air or drink tends to blessing and blissfulness, when we

Rejoice to see the curse remove
of poor jaded, physical nature.

"Do you mean to say," asks some good woman, aghast, "that there are people who actually take all this fuss and trouble to run off water, and boil it, and filter it, and pour it back and forth, and cool it for drinking?" Yes, madam, there are plenty of them. One intelligent woman who lived abroad in the best circles in Europe for years, superintending her children's education, tells me she always prepared the drinking-water and then corked it in bottles on the ice, which saved all trouble to the servants in cracking ice, rinsing it and filling pitchers when busy, an interruption they never feel very willing to make. The water was always pleasantly cool to the right temperature, and the boiling and filtering could all be done the day before. Plenty of plain New England families are scrupulous to prepare drinking-water in this way, with the reward that, other things being equal, childish ailments are unknown. Babies kept on stirilized milk and water are proof against cholera infantum and minor maladies, if they can have decently pure air to breathe in addition. Perfect purity of air being impossible is so much the more reason for not giving them impure food to contend with. As for grown people, those who have once been used to pure water will never tolerate other for drinking or cooking any more than they will take Laguayra coffee in preference to finest Java.

The question of absolutely pure water is of more serious import this summer than usual, when countless numbers are struggling with the general disorder left by last winter's scourge. It takes two years, the doctors say, to get over typhoid fever entirely, and six months have not begun to eliminate the traces of the grip, whose claw-like hold is on the heart, brain and digestive organs alike. People who never knew they had stomachs before find this season that ice-water produces immediate stoppage of the digestion and pain, that food does not allay hunger or give strength, and sleep flies in consequence of this disturbance. Noise and fret are oppressive and intolerable to the weakened system, and work must perforce be slow and interrupted. Such persons need to give themselves every chance or their names are found in the little paragraph which ends with heart failure.

SHIRLEY DARE.

LIGHT ON MARIE ANTOINETTE.

She Wasn't Wise and Couldn't Get Partners at Her Own Ball.

The prevailing impression regarding the part played by Marie Antoinette in the critical days preceding and immediately following the meeting of the States General is derived from Mirabeau's assertion that "the only man the king had about him was the queen."

The truth is, says St. Armand in his new work, Mirabeau, who knew nothing about Marie Antoinette except from hearsay, exaggerated her abilities, though not her influence over her husband. A much more trustworthy authority, the Baron de Bersenval, makes it clear that Marie Antoinette was fitted neither by education nor character for interference in political affairs. She was ignorant of history, and had read scarcely anything except novels. The moment any one began to talk seriously her face expressed weariness and the conversation flagged. Her own talk was always desultory, flitting from one subject to another; the gossip of the day and stories of the court and town interested her more than discussions about finance and politics.

Notwithstanding the obvious absurdity of consulting such a person in matters of state, there is no doubt that she had acquired, and that she exercised, complete ascendency over her husband. On this point Bersenval has recorded that, "whether through a consciousness of her superiority, or through fear or charm, not only did Louis XVI never oppose her, but I have seen more than a thousand times that when she was speaking his eyes and mien expressed a feeling and eagerness which the most dearly loved mistress seldom evokes."

The Queen's unpopularity increased rapidly in Paris, and as early as February, 1787, she was hissed at the opera. A few months later the feeling against her had become so much inflamed that by the advice of the lieutenant of police Louis XVI forbade her to show herself in Paris. What made her situation the more grievous was the desertion of the courtiers.

After the King had consented not only to convene the States General, but to convoke them at Versailles instead of at a distance, and to double the number of delegates from the third estate—all three of which concessions were, not without reason, attributed to Marie Antoinette—the nobility did not conceal their aversion to the Queen.

At the last court ball in 1788 no one was willing to dance with her. For this almost incredible fact we have the testimony of Mme. Vigee-Leblun, who was present. "The box," she says, "in which I happened to be sitting was so near the Queen's that I could overhear what she said. I saw her, in some agitation, inviting the young men of the court to dance, among them M. de Lameth (who belonged to a family which she had overwhelmed with deeds of kindness) and others, all of whom refused her, so that it was impossible to make up the sets for the square dances. The indecorous conduct of those gentlemen shocked me. Their refusal seemed to me a sort of revolt. The revolution was approaching—it broke out the next year."

The Workingman as Home-Owner.

New York Commercial Bulletin.

There were in 1880 about 9,000,000 dwellings for 10,000,000 families. Say that there were more dwellings on farms than there were farms, still that population did not occupy more than half the dwellings, and part of these were owned by the wage-earners. The rest of the families, about 5,000,000 in number, must occupy the remaining 4,500,000 dwellings, and any student of the subject will be driven to the conclusion that a considerable portion of the workingmen own their own homes.